



Water Resources Division's Aquatic Invasive Species of the Week!

FOR THE WEEK OF:

August 19-25, 2013

Wels Catfish *Silurus glanis*

Member of the "Least Wanted"

The Great Lakes Governors and the Premiers of Ontario and Quebec recently announced the "Least Wanted" aquatic invasive species that pose both an ecological and economic threat to the Great Lakes Region. Through executive action, regional collaboration, and a public information campaign, the Governors and Premiers will have a unified approach for preventing these "Least Wanted" from entering the Great Lakes. For more information on the Council of Great Lakes Governors visit: www.cglg.org.

Origin: Eastern Europe and Asia

Also Known As: sheatfish

Current Distribution: Introduced to large rivers and lakes in Germany, France, Spain, England, Greece, Turkey, and the Netherlands. Not yet in the United States!

Description: Elongated, scaleless body. Darker color dorsally and lightens near the belly. The body has a brown mottled appearance. Small dorsal fin with one spine and 4-5 soft rays. Two pairs of barbels.

Can grow up to 10 feet!

Threat to US: A recent climate matching analysis found the Great Lakes region to be a "very high" match for the Wels catfish (Australian Bureau of Rural Sciences 2010).

Impacts: Potential harmful effects on the native fish and mollusk populations, possible disease transmission, and habitat degradation.

Potential means of introduction: Imported for sport fishing, aquaculture, live food trade or use in the pet trade.



Above, fisherman Rodney Hills caught this Wels catfish in England. Photo by Adrian Hills.



National Geographic Fellow Zeb Hogan and a fishing guide with a Wels catfish in Spain. Photo: Zeb Hogan.

For more information on the Wels catfish, please visit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's website: www.fws.gov/injuriouswildlife